

Message Text

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SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07 IO-13 MCT-01 CU-02
DHA-02 ORM-02 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00
SAJ-01 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 NEAE-00 /122 W
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O P 061537Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2464

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 178

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

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CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 8729

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION DECEMBER 4-6

REF: BEIRUT 8700 (DTG 031447Z DEC 76)

1. SUMMARY. PALESTINIANS HOLDING ASF TO 1969 CAIRO ACCORDS ON
HEAVY WEAPONS TURNOVER; RIGHTISTS PROTESTING AGREEMENT OBSOLETE.
QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MAY MEET DEC 6 OR 7. CLASHES REPORTED
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IN MARJAYUN AREA IN THE SOUTH. SOME PROGRESS REPORTED BY PLO

LEADER IN RESOLUTION OF SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN DIFFERENCES. INCIDENTS
IN BEIRUT MAY RESULT IN ASF INSTITUTION OF CURFEWS IN ADDITIONAL AREAS

OF CITY. PRO-IRAQI BAATH LEADER PROTESTING ASF OCCUPATION OF HIS OFFICE IN TRIPOLI; CHRISTIANS AND POPULAR SYRIAN PARTY SPAR IN KURA. SKIRMISH REPORTED IN BEQAA BETWEEN VANGUARDS OF LEBANESE ARAB ARMY, AIDED BY ASF, AND LOCAL STUDENTS. CONGRESS OF KATAEB STUDENT SERVICE SUPPORTS BOTH LEBANESE UNITY AND DECENTRALIZATION. CHAMOUN CONTINUES HARD ANTI-PALESTINIAN LINE. SPECULATION CONTINUES ON IMMINENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW GOVERNMENT TO INCLUDE MAINLY TECHNOCRATS. CONFLICTING REPORTS ABOUT TIMING OF MEETING OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. FRENCH PUBLICLY DENY ALLEGED NOTE EXCHANGES BETWEEN USG AND FRANCE ON LEBANON. BRITS TO REOPEN EMBASSY VISA SECTION DEC 13. ILO AND UN REPRESENTATIVES PRESENTLY MEETING WITH LEBANESE LEADERS TO DISCUSS RECONSTRUCTION. END SUMMARY.

2. TURNOVER OF HEAVY WEAPONS. PALESTINIANS INSISTING ON RETAINING DEFENSIVE WEAPONS, SUCH AS ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS, WHICH 1973 AMMENDMENTS TO CAIRO AGREEMENT ALLEGEDLY PERMITTED IN CAMPS. ARGUMENT SUCH WEAPONS

NEEDED AGAINST POSSIBLE ISRAELI ATTACK MAY BE ANSWERED, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT, BY FORMAL SYRIAN GUARANTEE OF SECURITY IN CAMPS. ASF HAS EXTENDED DATE FOR COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS TO DEC 12. PRESS REPORTS MIXED PALESTINIAN-ASF COMMITTEES MAY SOON MEET TO WORK OUT DETAILS OF COLLECTION. AN NAHAR REPORTS DEC 3 AGREEMENT BETWEEN AL-HAJJ AND ARAFAT PERMITTING PALESTINIANS TO KEEP LIGHT ARMS AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS IN CAMPS, WITH SOME HEAVY ARMS UNDER ASF SUPERVISION AND OTHERS TRANSFERRED TO THE SOUTH. NATIONAL MOVEMENT DECLARED DEC 3 ITS READINESS TO TURN OVER HEAVY WEAPONS, PROVIDED PALESTINIANS ALLOWED KEEP THEIR ARMS. PHALANGE PARTY QUESTIONING HOW LEBANESE CAN TURN OVER ARMS WHEN "AGRESSOR ALIENS" REFUSE TO DO SO. PIERRE GEMAYEL STATED THERE "NO POINT IN DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE WEAPONS...IT...RIDICULOUS TO MAINTAIN THE IDEA THAT ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS ARE PURELY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS." QUADRUPARTITE COMMITTEE, WHICH EXPECTED TO DEAL WITH HEAVY ARMS QUESTION, EXPECTED TO MEET IN BEIRUT DEC 6 OR 7.

3. SOUTH LEBANON. CLASHES BETWEEN PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS AND CHRISTIAN RIGHTISTS REPORTED DEC 3 IN MARJAYUN DISTRICT AFFECTING CONFIDENTIAL

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VILLAGES OF RACHIF, TIRI, QULAYA AND AISOUN. PRESS REPORTS ISRAELI GROUND FORCES CONCENTRATED OPPOSITE BINT JBAYL. ACCORDING TO RESS, MEETING TOOK PLACE DEC 4 AT KHYAM BETWEEN RIGHTISTS AND LEFTISTS TO BRIDGE THEIR DIFFERENCES AFTER CHRISTIAN MILITIA AT QULAYA DELIVERED ULTIMATUM TO KHYAM LEFTISTS TO GIVE UP THEIR HEAVY WEAPONS. WE UNDERSTAND LEFTISTS HAD EARLIER ATTACKED CHRISTIANS BUT WERE REPELLED, WITH ISRAELIS GIVING CHRISTIANS ARTILLERY SUPPORT. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT NEUTRALIST CHRISTIANS AT KHYAM SOUGHT AND

OBTAINED FINANCING BY AL-HAJJ. SOME 150 SUDANESE TROOPS ARRIVED BEIRUT BY AIR DEC 4 AND ADDITIONAL NON-SYRIAN FORCES EXPECTED VIA DAMASCUS. SPECULATION IS THESE TROOPS, PLUS SMALL NUMBER OF SYRIANS, WILL CONSTITUTE FORCE OF SOME 2,000 TO OCCUPY TYRE AND NABATIYAH. PRESS NOTES DEC 5 ISRAELI GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE INDICATING ISRAEL REFUSES TO "RETURN TO THE SITUATION PREVALENT BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR." L'ORIENT-LE JOUR NOTES ARAFAT, WHO NOW IN BELGRADE, SAID EXPLOSIVE SITUATION IN SOUTH DUE TO INTERNATIONAL FORCES, PARTICULARLY THE US, WHICH CONTINUES IGNORE EXISTENCE AND RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. WE UNDERSTAND IRAQIS GRADUALLY LEAVING LEBANON, BUT THAT SOME 2,500 REMAIN, MOSTLY MOVING TOWARDS THE SOUTH.

4. PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS. PRESS SPECULATES PROGRESS MADE IN RESOLVING SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN DIFFERENCES, NOTING PLO LEADER ABU MAHER DESCRIBED AS "POSTIVE" MEETING BETWEEN ARAFAT AND PRESIDENT ASAD LAST WEEK. MAHER REPORTED TO PLO LEADERSHIP DEC 4 PROGRESS IN COORDINATING SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN CONTACTS, ON RESUPPLYING PALESTINIAN UNITS AND ON MOVEMENT OF PALESTINIAN UNITS FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER. THERE STILL DISAGREEMENT, HOWEVER, ON DEFINITION OF HEAVY WEAPONS.

5. INCIDENTS IN BEIRUT. ACCORDING TO KATAEB RADIO, ASF CONSIDERING ESTABLISHMENT OF CURFEW IN CEERTAIN ADDITIONAL AREAS OF THE CITY AS RESULT OF SEVERAL RECENT INCIDENTS. DEC 4 A CAR WAS BLOWN UP BY IMPROVISED TIME BOMB IN MOUSSAYTHAH, ABOUT 100 METERS FROM HOME OF KAMAL JUNBLATT (WHO WAS IN SHUF FOR WEEKEND). FOUR PEOPLE REPORTEDLY KILLED AND 24 WOUNDED. A LANDROVER USED TO DELIVER NEWSPAPERSS AND MAGAZINES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT WAS BLOWN UP DEC 3 IN EAST BEIRUT. AL MUHARRIR REPORTS TWO HEAVY EXPLOSIONS HEARD NIGHT DEC 5 IN SOUTHERN SUBURBS, BUT SOURCE UNKNOWN. ANOTHER INCIDENT INVOLVED FIRE THE NIGHT OF DEC 4-5 IN OFFICES OF LAA AT MAZRAA BUT THIS APPARENTLY DUE TO ELECTRICAL SHORT CIRCUIT RATHER CONFIDENTIAL

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THAN SABOTAGE. AL MUHARRIR CLAIMS CHRISTIANS IN EAST BEIRUT STILL OPERATING NUMBER OF ROADBLOCKS AND PREVENTING RETURN OF EARLIER INHABITANTS TO AREAS OF NABA, MASLAKH AND KARANTINA.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2465

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6. THE NORTH: TENSIONS IN TRIPOLI AND THE KURA. ASF TROOPS ENTERED HOME OF DR ABEL RAFII, DEPUTY FROM TRIPOLI AND LEADER OF PRO-IRAQI BAATH PARTY, AND OCCUPIED HIS PARTY OFFICE IN TRIPOLI, ARRESTING TWO OF HIS AIDES. AL BAYRAQ REPORTED OVER 50 PERSONS ARRESTED IN TRIPOLI ALLEGEDLY IN CONNECTION WITH ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM. AFTER CONVOY OF SOME 200 VEHICLES RETURNED DEC 4 TO KURA VILLAGE OF AMYUN WITH PPS (POPULAR SYRIAN PARTY) MEMBERS,

CHRISTIANS CHARGE PPS MEMBERS TORE UP LEBANESE FLAG TO PROVOKE THEM.

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CAMILLE CHAMOUN CONDEMNED PROVOCATIONS "OF THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR ALLIES WHO HAVE RETURNED TO CHEKKA AND AMYUN." PPS CLAIM CHRISTIAN MILITIAS FIRED SEVERAL MORTAR ROUNDS AT THEM, IN SPITE OF THEIR ASF ESCORT. AL MUHARRIR REPORTS ASF DECISION DEC 5 TO PERMIT ONLY FORMER RESIDENTS AND JOB HOLDERS TO ENTER KURA DISTRICT.

7. CLASH IN THE BEQAA. CLASH OCCURRED IN SOUTH BEQAA VILLAGE OF JEB-JANNIN OVER OCCUPATION OF A BUILDING BY VANGUARDS OF LEBANESE ARAB ARMY. AFTER VERBAL EXCHANGE WITH OWNER, VANGUARDS FIRED ON HIS DEPARTING CAR AND CRITICALLY INJURED HIM. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED DEC 4 AGAINST INCIDENT. CLASH FOLLOWED VANGUARDS AND ASF EFFORT TO DISPERSE DEMONSTRATORS, IN WHICH ONE MAN KILLED AND FIVE WOUNDED.

8. PHALAANGIST STUDENT CONGRESS. THE 14TH CONGRESS OF KATAEB STUDENT SERVICE (SEK) MET OVER WEEKEND, PRESIDED OVER BY LOUIS HENEINE AND ATTENDED BY BECHIR GEMAYEL. EXPECTED ANNOUNCE DEC 6 NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS, INCLUDING OPPOSITION TO ACTIONS WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE LEBANESE NATIONAL UNITY, BUT DEMANDING ESTABLISHMENT OF BRANCHES OF WEST BEIRUT UNIVERSITIES IN EASTERN SECTOR, "WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DECENTRALIZATION WHICH THE KATAEB PARTY SUPPORTS."

9. CHAMOUN'S HARD LINE. CAMILLE CHAMOUN ADDRESSED GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR 150 NLP MILITIA AT BEIT MERY DEC 5. HE SAID THERE WILL BE NO TRUE PEACE IN LEBANON AS LONG AS ARMED PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUE TO EXIST.

10. FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT. AN NAHAR EXPECTS 6-8 MEMBER CABINET TO BE NAMED DEC 7, COMPOSED OF TECHNOCRATS, AND WILL BE A "TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT" UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A GOVERNMENT OF POLITICIANS CAN BE FORMED. IN ADDITION TO SALIM AL-HUSS AS PRIME MINISTER, SPECULATIONS ON MINISTERIAL POSITIONS INCLUDE: FUAD BOUTROS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, METRI NAMAR, PUBLIC WORKS; CHAFIC MOHARRAM, FINANCE; GABY LAHOUD, DEFENSE; AND RIDA WAHID, SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

11. PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. JERUSALEM AFP REPORTS GOI CLAIM CONGRESS HAS BEEN POSTPONED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. HOWEVER, AFP CAIRO QUOTES PLO POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF QADDOUMI AS SAYING COUNCIL WILL MEET IN JANUARY IN CAIRO. SAIQA SECRETARY GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

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ZOUHEIR MOHSEN SAID TALK OF MEETING IS PREMATURE.

12. ALLEGED US-FRENCH NOTES EXCHANGE ON LEBANON. FRENCH GOVERNMENT PUBLICLY DENIED TO LEBANESE DEPUTIES IN PARIS THAT ALLEGED NOTES WERE EXCHANGED, HOWEVER, POLITICAL REACTION IN BEIRUT CONTINUES.

CAMILLE CHAMOUN SPOKE DISPARAGINGLY OF POSSIBILITY OF PRESIDENTIAL REGIME IN DEBANUN. SOME CONSERVATIVE MOSLEM LEADERS APPLAUDED IDEA THAT OLD "PRINCES" OF LEBANESE POLITICS SHOULD BE SUPPLANTED.

13. BRITS TO RENEW CONSULAR ACTIVITIES. THE BRITISH EMBASSY ANNOUNCED DEC 6 THAT, STARTING DEC 13, ITS VISA SECTION WILL REOPEN. WE UNDERSTAND BEA REFUSING TO FLY TO BEIRUT BEFOREHAND.

14. RECONSTRUCTION. REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR
ORGANIZATION AND UN ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOR WEST ASIA ARE PRESENTLY
HOLDING MEETINGS IN BEIRUT WITH LEBANESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS,
INCLUDING LABOR MINISTER TUEINI, TO DISCUSS ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON.
DISCUSSIONS ARE EXPECTED TO LAST FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS.
BEIRUT PORT MAY RECOMMENCE SOME ACTIVITIES IN MID-DECEMBER.
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